

SURINAME (Tier 2 Watch List)

Suriname is a source, destination, and transit country for women, men, and children who are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor. Women and girls from Suriname, Guyana, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic are subjected to sex trafficking in the country. During the year, the Brazilian government identified Suriname as a key transit point for Brazilian trafficking victims exploited in Europe. Media reports and past convictions indicate that debt bondage and sex trafficking occur within the Chinese migrant community. NGOs and government sources continued to indicate that some women and girls are exploited in sex trafficking in Suriname's interior around mining camps, although the remote and illegal nature of these camps renders the scope of the problem unknown, and there is little government presence in these areas. Migrant workers in agriculture and on fishing boats off the coast are highly vulnerable to forced labor, as are children working in informal urban sectors and gold mines.

The Government of Suriname does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. During the year, authorities increased the number of sex trafficking cases prosecuted, and identified an increased number of child sex trafficking victims. The government did not, however, report any trafficking convictions, raising concerns about accountability for trafficking offenders. Victim protection remained inadequate, and local official complicity was a serious concern. Therefore, Suriname is placed on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year.

Recommendations for Suriname: Vigorously investigate and prosecute trafficking cases and convict trafficking offenders, including officials complicit in human trafficking; ensure that victims receive adequate specialized services through partnering with and funding NGOs that provide these services; ensure that a victim's initial refusal to testify against a trafficker does not prevent authorities from pursuing a prosecution; provide training to law enforcement, immigration, health care, labor, and judicial officials and social workers regarding the identification of trafficking cases and the treatment of victims; and continue to raise awareness about all forms of trafficking.

Prosecution

The Government of Suriname prosecuted an increased number of sex trafficking cases during the year; however, accountability for trafficking offenders continued to be a problem as it convicted no trafficking offenders and local official complicity remained a concern. Suriname prohibits all forms of human trafficking through a 2006 amendment to its criminal code, which prescribes sufficiently stringent penalties of five to 20 years' imprisonment—penalties that are commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. The police continued to operate a specialized anti-trafficking unit that investigated cases and conducted administrative checks of nightclubs in the capital where prostitution occurred. The government had insufficient resources to conduct investigations in the country's interior, however, and prosecutions are almost exclusively dependent on the victim's willingness to testify.

Officials investigated eight cases of child sex trafficking in 2012, compared to two cases of child sex trafficking in 2011. Authorities investigated two potential forced labor cases involving fishing vessels: one Chinese vessel with Burmese fishermen and a Guyanese vessel with Guyanese fishermen. Officials determined, however, that these cases were labor disputes. The government initiated five prosecutions involving 19 trafficking offenders or accomplices during the year, including six trafficking offenders whose trial *in absentia* was ongoing at the close of

the reporting period; authorities did not report convicting any trafficking offenders. The government initiated the prosecution of a local government official for subjecting two Guyanese girls to forced prostitution. In another case, authorities refused to investigate a businessman accused of luring a foreign victim to Suriname with a job offer and subsequently attempting to compel the woman to engage in sexual acts for his webcam pornography business, and physically assaulting the victim when she refused. The government reported training law enforcement officials in the capital and in one district on investigations and victim identification.

Protection

The Government of Suriname identified an increased number of child sex trafficking victims during the year, though victim services remained inadequate and authorities refused to assist an adult sex trafficking victim. Authorities did not employ formal procedures to proactively identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, such as women in prostitution or migrant workers, but 40 labor inspectors received training on how to identify victims during routine labor inspections. Although the government did not have a formalized process to refer trafficking victims to NGOs that provide services, authorities reported doing so on an *ad hoc* basis. Overall, the government had insufficient resources to pay for victim care, and adequate medical and psychological services were lacking. During the year, Surinamese authorities identified 20 potential trafficking victims and referred only seven to care facilities. The government reimbursed one NGO for providing basic services to seven child sex trafficking victims, and three child victims ran away from the NGO shelter and were returned by the police. Services for adult victims were more limited, and at least one adult foreign victim received no care services from authorities. The government reported that it encouraged victims to assist with the prosecution of trafficking offenders, but it was unclear how many did so during the year. There was no specialized mechanism in place to provide foreign victims of trafficking with alternatives to their removal to countries where they faced retribution or hardship, and while authorities reported that foreign victims could apply for work or residency permits, none did so during the year.

Prevention

The Government of Suriname maintained limited trafficking prevention efforts during the reporting period. The government's interagency anti-trafficking working group continued to coordinate the government efforts. In 2012, the working group created a draft anti-trafficking policy and released a public service announcement to raise awareness about human trafficking. The anti-trafficking police maintained a hotline, although it was unclear how many calls it received during the year. There were no reported cases of or measures against child sex tourism during the year. The government made no discernible efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex or forced labor.